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Review of *"That Man Partridge": E. A. Partridge, His Thoughts and Times* By Murray Knuttila

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"That Man Partridge": E. A. Partridge, His Thoughts and Times. By Murray Knuttila. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1994. Introduction, table, bibliography, index. viii + 95 pp. \$15.00 paper.

Effectively demonstrating the interconnections between biography and history, Murray Knuttila introduces readers to E. A. Partridge, who played a pivotal role in the development of agrarian society, economy, and politics in Canada's prairie provinces during the early twentieth century. Edward Alexander Partridge, writes Knuttila, "was part of an historic transformation of an entire region through settlement and then what might be called 'unsettlement'" (p. 85). Knuttila focuses on Partridge's life during the tumultuous decades between 1900 and 1930, exploring how

Partridge both affected and was affected by his historical context.

A leading force in establishing cooperative farming ventures in post-Confederation Canada, Partridge distinguished himself through involvement in the Territorial Grain Growers' Association and the Grain Growers' Grain Company. He participated in and attempted to alter the structure of the Canadian National Policy, which sought to establish an agrarian society in the western provinces to produce agricultural goods, as well as to consume manufactured goods from the nation's industrial center.

Partridge did not content himself with simply establishing cooperative farming practices, however. Dissatisfied with solutions proposed by the Canadian Progressive Party, he formulated increasingly radical views about politics, economics, and social structure until his death in 1931. "Partridge was a visionary thinker unwilling to accept that the situation at any given moment was all that was possible," Knuttila writes (p. 39). For Partridge, the future offered the possibility of overcoming the shortcomings he believed inherent in a capitalist society.

Knuttila's biography is valuable because it adds to our understanding of Canadian agrarian history and chronicles a historical figure not yet extensively examined. "*That Man Partridge*" is recommended reading for anyone interested in Canadian or Great Plains economic, social, or political history.

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